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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EA-06

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---------- 055289
R 071740Z MAY 75
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0981
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 6628

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, IT, VS
SUBJECT: ITALIAN RECOGNITION OF THE PRG

REF: ROME 5981

1. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR EAST ASIAN AFFAIRS (FRANCESCO LO PRINZI) HAS INFORMED US THAT ITALY IS NOT YET PREPARED TO TAKE ANY STEPS TOWARD FORMALLY RECOGNIZING THE PRG. SINCE THE ITALIAN PRACTICE IS TO GRANT RECOGNITION TO STATES AND NOT TO GOVERNMENTS, THE QUESTION OF THE PRECISE TYPE OF GOVERNMENT IN POWER IN SAIGON IS NOT AT QUESTION IN THE RECOGNITION PROCESS. NEVERTHELESS, THE ITALIANS PREFER TO STUDY THE SITUATION IN SAIGON BEFORE MAKING ANY DECISION ON THE QUESTION OF RECOGNITION. IN STRICT CONFIDENCE, OUR SOURCE INDICATED THAT CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY SECRETARY AMINTORE FANFANI HAS PRESSURED THE GOVERNMENT TO GO SLOW ON THIS ISSUE FOR REASONS OF DOMESTIC POLITICS.
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2. LO PRINZI INDICATED THAT THE ENTIRE STAFF OF THE VIETNAMESE EMBASSY HAS FORMALLY REQUESTED POLITICAL ASYLUM IN ITALY THROUGH THE PROTOCOL SECTION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. (HOWEVER, WE HAVE LEARNED THAT MOST INDIVIDUALS HAVE PLANS TO RESETTLE ELSEWHERE, ESPECIALLY IN FRANCE.) LO PRINZI FORESEES SOME POSSIBLE DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS, I.E., OPPOSITION FROM THE SOCIALISTS, IN DEALING WITH THE REQUEST FROM THE AMBASSADOR SINCE HE IS A BROTHER OF EX-PRESIDENT THIEU. (THE ITALIANS MAY BE SPARED CONTROVERSY ON THIS SINCE WE HAVE JUST HEARD FROM A SOUTH VIETNAMESE EMBASSY OFFICER THAT THE AMBASSADOR WILL BE LEAVING SHORTLY FOR PARIS.) HE WOULD NOT ANTICIPATE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN HANDLING THE REQUESTS OF OTHER EMBASSY OFFICERS.

3. LO PRINZI REVEALED THAT THE MINISTRY HAD JUST RECEIVED A CABLE FROM THE ITALIAN EMBASSY IN PARIS REPORTING A REPRESENTATION FROM THE PRG AMBASSADOR THERE WHO ASKED THAT THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT TAKE STEPS TO SECURE THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE EMBASSY IN ROME ON BEHALF OF THE PRG. THE ITALIANS ARE NOW EXAMINING THIS QUESTION, BUT THE INITIAL REACTION OF OUR SOURCE WAS TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION THAT THE PRG AMBASSADOR IN PARIS BE INFORMED THAT A PRG REPRESENTATIVE WOULD HAVE TO COME TO ROME TO TAKE CONTROL OF THE EMBASSY.

4. COMMENT: WHILE ITALIANS CAN BE EXPECTED TO PROCEED SOMEWHAT CAUTIOUSLY ON RECOGNITION QUESTION, WE WOULD EXPECT THAT DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS PLUS DESIRE TO REMAIN IN STEP WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE EC WILL LEAD THEM TO TAKE FORMAL NOTICE OF THE NEW SITUATION IN DUE COURSE. THE MOST LIKELY METHOD OF ACCOMPLISHING THIS WILL BE ISSUANCE OF A STATEMENT SIMILAR TO THE ONE MADE RECOGNIZING THE NEW PHNOM PENH REGIME (REFTEL). IN ANY EVENT, THE ITALIANS ARE SOMEWHAT HOOKED ON THE ISSUE OF RECOGNIZING STATES AND NOT GOVERNMENTS BY THEIR FAILURE TO RECOGNIZE THE PINOCHET REGIME IN CHILE FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS. VOLPE

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